Northside High School

Memo

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| To: | Principal X |
| From: | Cassia Roper |
| cc: | Assistant Principal Y |
| Date: | 01 June 2017 |
| Re: | Mentoring Program for Beginning Teachers |

As another school year ends and we turn our attention to the next, this school will once again be the opening chapter for some new teachers. With beginning teacher retention rates low, I propose a new policy for an induction/mentorship program for beginning teachers (the first three years of their employment). While the district has one in place for school’s to utilize, it has come to my attention that many schools in the district are not taking advantage of this program to aid new teachers. The mentorship program I am proposing could take on the name of the program in place at some schools- STEADY (Sustained Teacher Education Advisement for the Defining Years).

Beginning teachers in all content areas would be placed under the supervision of a veteran teacher in their field, and would also be assigned to an administrator (i.e. assistant principals). The mentorship would have beginning teachers meet bi-monthly with their supervisors to discuss their concerns, needs, or goals for the upcoming month. The assistant principal assigned to each group would only need to attend one of the bi-monthly meetings to check-in with the lead teacher and their focus group and to discuss expectations as well as listen to concerns or needs of beginning teachers. The veteran teacher would be responsible for documenting their time together, concerns addressed and how the needs were met, and would submit the file at the end of each month for review.

According to research done by Thomas Smith and Richard Ingersoll, there has been “a strong link between participation in induction programs and reduced rates of turnover.” Several schools in our district have implemented a similar program, and their turnover rates have dropped. Such a program creates a safety net for beginning teachers to deal with their frustrations, needs, and goals with a more experienced teacher and with an administrator. By creating a relationship with the selected administrator and teacher, a line of communication will be opened for teachers to receive the support they need and keep them in the classroom as well as allowing the administrator to relay expectations and hear what the school can do to make their year an easier transition. The key to any successful relationship is communication, and this mentorship program is mandates that.

This type of program that invests in beginning teachers aligns with Northside’s mission statement to relentlessly seek the “pursuit of high levels of learning for all students and adults alike.” By investing in our beginning teachers, we are increasing their comfort in the classroom and pushing them to higher learning which will in turn be relayed to their students. I propose that this program be implemented for the upcoming 2017-2018 school year. The first meeting will be held during pre-planning, Tuesday, August 2nd at 10:00am in the auditorium. In this meeting, all beginning teachers, veteran mentors, and administration will all gather to discuss the program, assign groups, and discuss expectations. At the end of this meeting, content areas will be able to gather in their groups for the final 30 minutes and plan their next meeting time and be introduced to their lead mentor and assigned administrator.

If this program seems like one that will be beneficial to our school, I ask that you contact me at your earliest convenience to discuss the details a little further. I look forward to hearing from you.